

Talking Points
Press conference to:
Sign SB 2628 - Children First Act
and
Announce NGA Grant to help under-performing schools
11:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 8, 2009

SB 2628-Children First Act of 2009:

- Legislation based on recommendations from a Task Force on Underperforming Schools established by the Legislature during the 2008 session
- One of the most sweeping education reform bills in several years – aimed at improving the performance of failing schools
- Removes superintendents and school board members when a district has been considered failing for two consecutive school years
- Creates a Mississippi Recovery School District to govern districts taken over by the state (modeled after the New Orleans Recovery School District headed by Paul Vallas)
- Requires all districts to publish an annual report to their communities, including achievement and financial data
- Districts taken over must form a communitywide P-16 council to assist with implementing the turnaround plan
- Tremendous accountability legislation for school leaders

NGA Grant Announcement:

- Mississippi is one of four states to receive an NGA grant in the amount of \$150,000 to develop a comprehensive strategy to improve/turnaround chronically underperforming schools (Colorado, Maryland and Massachusetts are other three)

- NGA and Mass Insight will provide nationally acclaimed leadership to work with a Statewide Policy Team composed of Legislators, Education Leaders, Business Community Leaders, and Education Associations
- Grant is directly correlated to the provisions of the Children First Act of 2009 and will develop a plan to be implemented in districts taken over by the State of Mississippi
- Recognize (ask them to stand) the members of the Statewide Policy Team that will guide the work of the grant (they will attend the press conference)
- Recognize (ask them to stand) two nationally acclaimed liaisons who will guide the team's work: David Wakelyn of NGA and Julie Corbett of Mass Insight.
- Grant is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation